

I am hard of hearing, with a high frequency loss. I have used a digital cell phone for about 2 ½ years, I started out with analog, and switched to digital because the sound quality was much better. I primarily have the phone for emergency use for being on the road, and I go into Denver from time to time with my son, and I feel better knowing that I can call someone if I need to.

However, with my hearing loss, I wear two BTE hearing aids. Because the signal from the phone interferes with my hearing aids, I have to turn my hearing aids off to use the phone, this works some of the time in the best reception areas. I can also use my HATIS BTE device: When I do, I have to get my remote control out for my hearing aids to switch my hearing aid to T-Switch. Then, I have very often have problems with the microphone sounding right because it produces a double echo, which makes it even harder for me to hear everything. I often spend time on the phone asking the person if they can hear me, and strain to hear the answer. I rarely have this problem on my regular phone line at home, because those phones are hearing aid compatible and I don't have to do a thing to use them.

I would like to emphasize that making digital cell phones compatible with hearing aids is the best answer to the problem of hearing aid users using digital cell phones. I am primarily thinking of emergency situations, when a user might not necessarily have the luxury of time to use the devices with the phone (see above where I describe using my HATIS device). Making cell phones compatible with hearing aids means that a person who doesn't need a t-switch (my case) could use the phone automatically, and the person who does need to use a t-switch is usually prepared from being accustomed to using a regular phone.

Please make digital cell phones compatible for hearing aid users! In an emergency situation, this could be the difference between life or death.